

WCGS News

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May 2000

What's Happening with WCGS?

Shirleyan Beacham Phelps

WCGS President & Editor WCGS News

April : We had an excellent meeting – Cullen Dunstan talked about the Lost (the Deserted) Colony and kept our attention while he dispelled several myths and made each of us wonder if we are descendants of those folks who were abandoned, rather than lost. He supported his discussion with handouts. Dunstan was introduced by Loretta H. Phelps, our program chair, who presented him with a copy of *Washington County, NC: a Tapestry*. (Courtesy: Washington County Bicentennial Committee, Chris Grimes, Chairman)

During the social period which followed the formal part of the program, folks talked with Dunstan and exchanged genealogical information while enjoying some delicious food, including homemade tea cakes, ham biscuits, muffins, nuts and lemonade (included here only to let you know our menu was based on what might have been served during the Civil War era). Marie Swain headed up the refreshment committee, assisted by her husband, Lawrence, and by Barbara M.

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How your ancestors lived 500 years ago

(The following was recently printed in *Family Tree*, a monthly publication of the Montgomery Co. Chapter of the Ohio Gen. Soc., and reprinted in *AntiqueWeek*, Eastern Edition, Mon., April 17, 2000 – 9B)

Life in the 1500s may have been rather disgusting, but this era may be the source for some of the descriptive modern-day sayings such as:

"Don't throw the baby out with the bath water." – Families took their yearly baths in May. Baths equaled a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice clean water, then all the sons and other men, next the women followed by the children. Last of all, the babies. By then, the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it. Hence, the saying "Don't throw the baby out with the bath water."

"It's raining cats and dogs" – Houses had thatched roofs – thick straw, piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the pets – dogs, cats and other small animals, mice, rats, bugs – lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery, and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof. Hence the saying, "It's raining cats and dogs."

There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house from the roof. This posed a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could really mess up your nice clean bed. So they found if they made beds with big posts and hung a sheet over the top, it addressed that problem. Hence, those beautiful big four-poster beds with canopies.

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Revels, Loretta H. Phelps and others. Good job – Marie, for the refreshments and Loretta (and Harry L. Thompson) – for the program.

We've had a good exchange of information from members and that needs to continue. Most comments, queries or sharing of information comes via email. We need members to share family trees or group sheets, descendancy charts, or just stories from the past that might be of interest to other members.

Two events in May: I had the privilege of interviewing (again) Dr. A. L. (Red) Whitehurst (a Pitt Co. native and son of a former sheriff) who has been a practicing chiropractor in Plymouth for 50 years. During the interview I met Dr. James Cranford, Jr., son of Creswell native, Phyllis Davenport Cranford and her husband, James F. Cranford, Sr., a native of Columbia. Dr. Cranford will be practicing in Plymouth beginning in June. By the time most of you read this, the open house to celebrate Dr. Whitehurst's 50 years will be a thing of the past – others may want to stop by for food, fun and memories on 25th May – and to meet another Phelps descendant!

Loretta H. Phelps invited us to the presentation of the historic marker in Cherry and again, I had an opportunity to talk to and write about two old timers – Jennings Davenport and Raymond Gibbs, together with others who shared memories of earlier days in Cherry, including Mary Pailin Hill (chairman of the Washington County Board of Education.) Davenport is 93, Gibbs now 91.

Our oldest grandson, Willie, now 28 and a police officer at East Carolina University, has decided to search for his ancestors. We rarely see youngsters that age delving into genealogy – Willie's biggest problem? He wants instant answers – a ready-made family tree – all the way back to his Peebles ancestors in Scotland. A little help with his Native American Indian ancestors would be a big help, too.

Linda Haas Davenport was in Washington County recently, hastily coping local records before she returns to Tulsa in June. Her work posting records on the Internet helps not only Davenports, but thousands of others as well. wcfgs

Obituaries

Gladys Pettiford Whitley, 93, 302 West Main Street, Plymouth, died 16 April 2000. She was born 1 October 1906 in Washington County, daughter of the late Reuben Pettiford and Nancy James. She owned a bed and breakfast and was a member of Spring Green Church of Christ, D. O. C., was a church mother and a choir member, was a member of the Women's Club of Spring Green, a Daughter of Isis, Queen Ester Jewel No. 32 Order of Eastern Star, a Democratic Precinct vice-president, an Empty Stocking volunteer, a member of NAACP, the Home Health Board, a member of the Emergency Relief Board of Washington County and was a 1927 graduate of Elizabeth City State University. Survivors include Velma Braye, Tuskegee, Ala. Her funeral was held 22 April at Spring Green with Elder Emmitt Goddette officiating; she was buried at Uniontown Church Cemetery with Toodle's Funeral Home, Plymouth, in charge of arrangements. [Note: Mrs. Whitley inherited her home from her parents. The house at 302 West Main Street, the Armistead House, was built about 1830. For more information on the history of the house on Lot 104, Arthur Rhodes' plot, see page 21-23, *My Home is Washington County, North Carolina* (Washington County Bicentennial Committee, 1999). Shirleyan Beacham Phelps, editor.)]

Thank you -

John and Nelva Swinson write: Thanks so much for the plant, visits, calls and cards. The outpouring of concern and kindness was greatly appreciated. It is a blessing to have such wonderful friends. wcfgs

WCGS Officers:

Shirleyan Beacham Phelps, President & Editor,
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Barbara Modlin Revels, Recording Secretary &
Chairman, Board of Directors - WCGS

Lawrence Swain, Corresponding Secretary

Vernon L. Everett Jr., Treasurer

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JUNE MEETING - WCGS

FIRST ORIGINAL FREEWILL BAPTIST CHURCH
FELLOWSHIP HALL – US 64 W, PLYMOUTH

18 JUNE – 2:30 P.M.

B. B. "Pat" White - Speaker

JULY MEETING - WCGS

COLUMBIA NC

23 JULY 2:30 P.M.

JOINT MEETING WITH TYRRELL COUNTY GENEALOGICAL AND
HISTORICAL (SENIOR CENTER ?)

CONCORD HOMECOMING 2000

CONCORD PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, CRESWELL NC
27 MAY 2000 @ 11 A.M.

Speaker: Shirleyan Beacham Phelps – followed by dinner on
the ground. wogs

Some genealogical terms:

Daughter: while it may be used in the modern sense, it might also refer to a daughter-in-law or stepdaughter. Father, mother and son are subject to the same variations.

Daughter-in-law: This term might have the same significance it has today or it might identify a stepchild. "In-law" simply signified any relationship established by marriage.

Brother or sister: Both of these terms may refer either one's current meaning or to a stepbrother or sister; a brother or sister-in-law, or the husband of a sister, stepsister or sister-in-law. It could also have meant a "brother in the church" or a good friend.

Nephew: while this term was usually used with its modern-day meaning, it sometimes referred to a niece or even a male or female grandchild in early records.

A publication of Washington County Genealogical Society,
P. O. Box 567, Plymouth NC 27962.

"Chew the fat" – Sometimes our ancestors could obtain pork and would feel really special when that happened. When company came over, they would bring out some bacon and hang it to show it off. It was a sign of wealth and that a man "could really bring home the bacon." They would cut off a little to share with guests and would all sit around and "chew the fat."

"Trench mouth" – Most people didn't have pewter plates but had a trencher – a piece of wood with the middle scooped out like a bowl. Trenchers were never washed, and a lot of times worms got into the wood. After eating off wormy trenchers, they would get "trench mouth."

"Upper Crust" – Bread was divided according to status. Workers got the burnt bottom of the loaf, the family got the middle and guests got the top, or the "upper crust."

"Saved by the bell" England is old and small and they started running out of places to bury people. So they would dig up coffins and would take their bones to a house and reuse the grave. In reopening these coffins, one out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside, and they realized they had been burying people alive. So they thought they would tie a string on the wrist of the corpse and lead the string through the coffin and up through the ground and tie it to the bell. Someone would have sit out in the graveyard all night to listen for the bell. Hence on the "graveyard shift," they would know that someone was "saved by the bell" or he was a "dead ringer."

wogs



Corrections and/or Additions:

Corrections, additions to roster included in the April WCGS News: Mrs. Ray Newbury writes: "Dear Friends at WCGS: Please note the spelling of our name on (1) checks (2) return address and (3) our signature. Since John Newbury in 1800 to this day we have always spelled it Newbury."

"Geologist or genealogist"

- The difference between a geologist and a genealogist is that one digs in the dirt and sometimes finds artifacts, and the other digs in facts and sometimes finds dirt! (Montgomery Co. Chapter O. G. S. vol. 19-6 [AntiqueWeek, Eastern Edition 15 May 2000]) wogs

Census Links on the WWW

U. S. Census bureau genealogy page:
www.census.gov/genealogy/www

www.censuslinks.com (Has some abstracted census records for most states and several other countries.)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

A: Joyce A. Campbell (Queries, April)

"I looked for your Levi E. Hassel and was unable to find him. I saw that he had a son, Levi W. Hassell, so I found Levi W. Hassell in the 1850 Census # 296 and 1860 # 201. Levi W. & Miranda had a son Durham E. of the correct age to be Levi E. There was nothing to stop people from changing their names in those days and some did. I was unable to find the Levi W. family in 1870. I have the Hassells abstracted from Washington, Martin and Tyrrell Counties. The first child Mary may have been named for Nancy's mother. The second child for Levi's father. A lot of that is found in those days. I was unable to find Josephus Smith until 1870 Cool Springs # 257, Washington Co.: N. Ambrose 31 male farmer, Mary A. 30 female Keeping house; Josephus Smith 13 male, laborer; Mary Ambrose, 3 female; Jane, 11 female. There were

William R. McCartin, 5066 Norrisville Rd., White Hall, MD 2116 was omitted from the roster.

B. A. (Bea) Ellenson, P. O. Box 2840, Cheyenne, WY 82003-2840 was also omitted.

Correct zip for Nelva Swinson is: 27846-9349

Mr. and Mrs. Elwood L. Long (not Elwood A.)

The roster was also incorrectly dated 1999 - should have been 2000.

New Member:

Ruby R. Furlough; 252 Coventry Rd.; Virginia Beach VA 23462-5939 - Researching: McGowan, Davenport, Woodley, Ambrose, Furlough - rfurlough@irt.net

E-mail addresses:

F. S. Tarkington, Jr.: Friench@ICSI.net

Page and Cindy Ambrose: Cambrose@sccoast.net

Forest A. Norman, Jr.: fanorman@shelby.net

wogs

Smiths in Washington County and I believe you should search Tyrrell in 1860. The children were born in Tyrrell Co. The 1860 census of Washington County was done by a alcoholic and is very poorly written. The people are not grouped by townships. There are spelling errors, wrong names, so the Durham could be a mistake. None of your Hassells or Smiths are shown in the Washington County death index. Sorry that I could not be of more help. Vernon Everett"

Editor's Note: The Ambrose cemetery to which Joyce Campbell referred in our April newsletter is located in the back yard of the home of Jan Etheridge, Cherry. It is the N. W. Ambrose Cemetery which was surveyed by Vance and Veronica Haskett on 9 January 1991. (SR 1155 - Cherry Road, Creswell NC 27928)

A: Emma Padgett does not appear in the Washington County death index. (VLE) wogs